

# LOCAL VOICES, LOCAL CHOICES!

Did you know that in early 2019, the Department of Education will be launching a review of Manitoba's K-12 education system? As part of this review, we expect the Department of Education will be looking for your feedback on a couple of topics that will be of significant concern to our school division: amalgamation and provincial funding/taxation power.

## Because our schools belong to our communities

**WHAT IF THE GOVERNMENT MOVES TO A FUNDING MODEL THAT RESTRICTS OR ELIMINATES THE ABILITY FOR SCHOOL DIVISIONS TO LEVY EDUCATION PROPERTY TAXES?**



### THERE IS A MYTH

that if the Government takes over funding of education, education property taxes will be eliminated.

Other Provinces in Canada have taken away the ability from school divisions to levy education property taxes, but they haven't eliminated education property taxes. They are collected by Government instead of by school divisions. If Manitoba were to go this way, all of our local tax dollars will be collected by Government and then distributed amongst all school divisions in a Provincial funding model.

Our local tax dollars would no longer be spent within our own school division on our own students.

### WE HAVE THE LOWEST SPECIAL LEVY MILL RATE OF ANY SCHOOL DIVISION IN THE PROVINCE

Our current mill rate is approx. 7.72 mills and the Provincial average is 13.6 mills.

Given this, we would speculate that if property taxes were collected by the Province we would see a very significant increase in the amount of education property taxes paid by taxpayers within our school division.

Our assessment would be shared throughout the Province and our low mill rate most likely adjusted upwards towards the average.



## MISSION STATEMENT

Fort La Bosse School Division is committed to working together with our communities to prepare students for the future by providing quality education and fostering lifelong learning in caring environments while making best possible use of resources.

In Fort la Bosse, we enjoy an education model where we are able to make decisions together based on our local needs. Our school division has a planning cycle established whereby representatives of our entire school division get together to prioritize programming that is specific to our needs here in Fort la Bosse.

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## What if the Government amalgamates our school division?

# BIGGER DOES NOT MEAN BETTER.

### BIGGER SCHOOL DIVISIONS CAN MEAN BIGGER COSTS.

Currently our school division manages in a very fiscally responsible manner including sharing services with other school divisions. Our school division has explored amalgamation with neighbouring divisions and has concluded there is no direct benefit to engaging in amalgamation. This is supported by a study known as the Owens Report written in 2005 following the last round of forced amalgamations in 2002 [https://fcpp.org/category/t\\_report/page/48/](https://fcpp.org/category/t_report/page/48/)

### DECISIONS IMPACTING OUR SCHOOLS WOULD BECOME MORE DISTANT FROM OUR COMMUNITIES.

Currently, the relationships with those making decisions on your behalf are local people that live and participate in our communities. They share similar values and are easily accessible.

We have the lowest education tax levy of any school division in the Province. If there were school division amalgamations we would expect to see a significant increase in the amount of education property taxes we pay as a result of 'averaging up' our mill rate to that of other school division(s).

### WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF LOCAL INITIATIVES IN OUR SCHOOL DIVISION?

- We make available educational programming options for our high school students in Reston, Elkhorn and Virden Collegiate such as power mechanics/vocational courses and alternative education
- Junior Kindergarten programming is offered at Oak Lake Community School, Elkhorn School, Plainview Colony School and Boundary Lane Colony School



- We deliver high school course options via video conferencing to the schools in Virden, Reston and Elkhorn
- We have established partnerships with our business community for projects such as our high speed fibre internet access and our apprenticeship work experience program for students in local businesses
- Local hiring; our school division provides local employment opportunities for attracting and retaining people that live and participate in our communities
- Through positive relationships with our municipal governments we continue to support local community initiatives
- We have a positive relationship with the Canupawakpa Dakota Nation community
- We have invested in creating an attractive and healthy learning environment for our students

### WE ARE OFFERING PROGRAMMING SPECIFIC TO OUR OWN STUDENTS' NEEDS IN OUR SCHOOL DIVISION.

The cost of this programming receives either no funding from the Department of Education or insufficient funding. Without the flexibility to generate local revenue, it would not be possible to continue to offer this programming. Further, we have some programs/projects that were initiated with specific grant money from the Government.

Now that these programs are established, there is no guarantee that the grant money from Government will continue.

If Government were to discontinue the funding for these programs/projects and with the ability to levy education property taxes, we still would be able to make the local decision as to whether to continue these programs as a division.

### BY MAKING DECISIONS LOCALLY TOGETHER, THERE IS GREATER TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN WHAT WE DO.

We encourage you to participate in the upcoming education review process. If you wish to discuss further or would like further clarification, please feel free to contact any of your local trustees or contact the school division office.

For trustee listings please see our website at [www.flbsd.mb.ca](http://www.flbsd.mb.ca)

PREPARING  
STUDENTS  
FOR THE  
FUTURE